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EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE ST. LOUIS MEETINGS

The convention at St. Louis will be remembered by all who were in attendance as a very serious, hard-working one, not that there was any lack of the enthusiasm, inspiration or good fellowship that always mark our gatherings of nurses, but the absence of any specially-planned means of relaxation, and the presence of so many able speakers, offering such important papers, combined to make the members feel that they must not lose anything that was offered them. Every session, except the few devoted wholly to business, was open to all who cared to attend. They had been so arranged that delegates to any one of the three divisions of our great national body might attend two or more of their own meetings daily and have some time for rest. The delegates, however, did not take advantage of the rest periods provided for them by the arrangement of their own part of the program. When one session of any sort was over, the audience moved in a body to whatever other meeting was being held, the result being a much better understanding of each other's problems, and a much better acquaintance between groups of workers, even though individuals grew tired, both in body and mind, from such constant listening and thinking. The audiences were so mixed, that one could hardly tell without consulting her program whether she was at a League meeting, one of public health nurses or of the American Nurses' Association. Their interests were one, as they should be. One cannot draw a sharp line and say, "This interests me, and this does not," for all nursing problems are common to us all. The thought came to us, as we wandered into a session we had not at first intended to include, and found it of absorbing interest, that it would be a good plan for delegates to choose always some subjects with which

they are not familiar. It is natural for one to choose to hear addresses on her own sort of work and on problems already familiar to her; this is an advantage, often, but to hear less familiar topics discussed, broadens our minds and deepens our interest.

Some of the best addresses of the convention were given by lay speakers. Two of these were "Preparation of Bills and Publicity Methods" by Mr. Roger Baldwin of St. Louis, and "Records and Statistics" by Mr. Hoffman of the Prudential Life Insurance Company. These would seem to be dry subjects, at first thought, but both were not only intensely interesting and practical, but sparkling with humor, which kept the audiences in ripples of laughter, as they had pointed out to them how not to legislate, or what not to put into a record.

The innovation of a Sunday session was most successful. The Odeon, a great music hall, was well filled by an earnest audience heartily interested in the subject of the afternoon, "Religion in the Life of a Nurse." The beautiful music, Dr. Emerson's fine address, the speakers who represented different faiths, and the glimpses of missionary work, through letters and speakers, all were an inspiration and help to each nurse in the cultivation of that spiritual side of her nature without which her work misses its greatest value.

The provision for Round Tables proved a wise one and many took advantage of them for further discussion of special problems. The private duty nurses asked for a full half day next year, and the round table on registries resulted in the formation of a committee which will work through the year on standards for central directories and which will try to compile a complete list of such directories as are conducted by accredited nursing associations. Miss Beattie of Cleveland is chairman.

Another unusual section was that devoted to the topic of midwifery, with Miss VanBlarcom as chairman. All social workers come across the dirty, incompetent midwife and know how serious a problem is the question of the control of such women who leave death, invalidism or blindness in their train. In our large cities most of the wives of foreigners of the laboring class are attended in labor by midwives. In some states laws have been passed forbidding such women to practice without proper training, but there is at present only one good school for midwives in the United States, that at Bellevue Hospital. A few of these women have been trained well abroad, but they are in the minority. The problem seems to be a three-fold one—either to educate the foreign women to employ doctors (and the competent obstetrician who will serve the poor for a moderate fee does not grow on every bush); to establish numerous good schools where midwives shall be properly trained; or to induce visiting nurses to add midwifery to their accomplishments. The

committee on midwives advocated the recognition of midwifery as a branch of nursing and the registration of competent midwives with the various visiting nurse associations. The problem is still under consideration by the Organization for Public Health Nursing. It is a many-sided one, and the attitude of the medical profession toward nurse midwives will have a bearing on its solution. Training in midwifery is a common addition to a nurse's preparation in England, but it has never been favored here. There is no reason why it should not be, if that is the best way of meeting the situation.

An important resolution adopted by the three organizations was that on the classification of those who care for the sick into two classes, nurses and attendants, rather than into three grades, as recommended by the American Hospital Association.

In justice to the St. Louis nurses it must be explained that their first plans for the convention would have made it a more restful one than it proved. They had engaged accommodations for the delegates at a residential hotel, some distance from the business part of the city, and had planned to have the meetings held in the lecture rooms of a group of churches which surround the hotel. This arrangement would have afforded greater quiet, with more exercise and fresh air. When the date of the convention was changed from June to April by the joint executive committee of the three organizations, this plan had to be given up, as the residential hotel was not available so early in the spring, and the only other practicable plan was that adopted, the holding of the day meetings in the Planters Hotel, where conventions are usually held. This was a most acceptable arrangement so far as the living accommodations were concerned, and the little expedition at night to the church where the evening meetings were held, was refreshing, but the city noises were disturbing. The unexpected clashing of dates with a dentists' state society upset the plans made by our hostesses for a tea on the opening day, and crowded things somewhat at the start. The members of the arrangements committee were indefatigable in looking after the comfort of their guests, they met every emergency as it arose in the most satisfactory manner, and though prohibited by the executive committee from planning for any entertainments, arranged very happily for the nurses who were not delegates, by sending them off for an automobile ride on the afternoon when the business meeting for delegates only was scheduled.

The discussion on the training school curriculum brought out many suggestions as to what should be included. Each public health enthusiast wished the pupil nurse trained in her special branch of work and it became evident that if half these requests were granted there would be no

time left for general training. The superintendent of the small school felt it so difficult to bring her pupils up to the standards being planned for the larger schools that it is planned to give special attention another year to the adaptation of these plans to the smaller institution. Very interesting exhibits were given of training school work, class methods, and of the Town and Country Nursing Service.

Rumors of war kept Miss McIsaac at her post in Washington and were responsible for the recall of Miss Delano after the first part of the convention was over. Before she left, an impromptu gathering of enrolled Red Cross nurses was held, about five hundred being in attendance, and most explicit directions for preparedness were given by both Miss Delano and Miss Gladwin. The quiet earnest manner in which the directions were given and received showed that the enrolled nurses are a dependable body of workers, not a band of unpractical enthusiasts.

Many of the best-known of our nurse leaders were absent from the convention and were greatly missed, among them Miss Damer, Miss Riddle, Miss Gardner, president of the Public Health Organization, Miss Nutting, Miss Dock, Miss Giles, Miss Palmer, and many more. Telegrams of regret were sent to many of these, and Miss Damer, who has been twice president of the American Nurses' Association, once for a long period of time, was made an honorary member. It was good to hear again the characteristic comments of Miss Davis, when she was called upon for an opinion, and to see Miss Sly restored to health and once more her active, interested self—indeed it was good to see nurses from New Hampshire to Santa Barbara, and from Utah to West Virginia—to see the new eager faces as well as those well-known. Always such a gathering makes one proud to belong to her profession.

The JOURNAL book table was always the centre of an interested group, and its purpose was fulfilled, that of giving nurses an opportunity of seeing and comparing the various books written for their benefit. It is one thing to read the title of a book and consider its possible usefulness, it is another to take it in one's hand and compare it with some other on the same subject. Whether books are actually sold from the book table in large quantities does not so much matter, though there are always purchasers, too, but it should be understood by every nurse that the books are there for her inspection whether she ever intends to buy one or not.

One interesting side issue of the convention was the number of informal gatherings, usually in the form of a dinner or tea, of graduates from some one school, or city or state. The well-managed bulletin board gave an opportunity for arranging such meetings with little previous notice and they were most happy reunions.

An earnest appeal was made by Miss Goodrich for funds with which to conduct the arrangements for the San Francisco meeting, when our associations will be the hostesses of the International Council. The response to her request was most gratifying, two-thirds of the amount needed being pledged at once.

A NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The Central Bureau of Legislation and Information was created at the St. Louis meeting by action of the directors of the American Nurses' Association, with Mary C. Wheeler of Chicago as chairman. The purpose of the bureau is to afford a central office from which information can be obtained. Nurses wishing copies of state board literature should address Miss Wheeler, whose address will always be found in the Official Directory at the back of the JOURNAL. She has been for some time collecting data in regard to the various state boards, and this will be at the disposal of those needing it. It might not be amiss to suggest that those desiring information should inclose a stamp for the reply expected.

COPIES OF CONVENTION PAPERS

Nurses wishing copies of the papers read at the sessions of the League of Nursing Education should address their inquiries to the secretary of the League, Sara E. Parsons, Massachusetts General Hospital; those wishing copies of the Public Health papers should address the executive secretary of that organization, Ella Phillips Crandall, 54 E. 34th Street, New York City. The papers read at the sessions of the American Nurses' Association will be printed with the proceedings, in the July JOURNAL, or if there are too many for one issue, in July and August. Requests for separate reprints of any of these articles should be sent to the secretary, Katharine DeWitt, 45 South Union Street, Rochester, N. Y. Whether reprints are made of any paper, will depend on the number of orders received. As separate copies of the JOURNAL can be obtained for twenty-five cents each, it is probable that most nurses will prefer to order the JOURNAL, containing all the papers, rather than to pay nearly as much for a reprint of any one paper.

The papers read at the Legislative Session of the League and the American Nurses' Association are to be printed in a separate pamphlet by themselves, and will not appear in the JOURNAL. The price is not yet determined. These should be ordered from Miss Parsons.

NURSES SENT TO MEXICO

The brief notice, under the heading Army Nurse Corps, in our news department, will send a thrill of patriotism to the heart of every nurse who reads it, for she will realize that nine army nurses and three Red Cross nurses are actually on duty in Vera Cruz, the very heart of the disturbed region. These nurses will be followed by the interest and earnest wishes of thousands of nurses who are as ready as they to go if needed. Red Cross nurses who wish to be among the first summoned are reminded that preference will be given to those who follow the recommendations of the central committee in the matter of anti-typhoid inoculation.

NEW STATE ASSOCIATIONS

State associations have recently been formed in Utah, Alabama and Vermont, the nurses in each state feeling the need of a central body through which they can work for the common good. The Vermont nurses voted at their organization meeting to join the American Nurses' Association, and it is hoped the others will do so promptly, as the national work can be carried on best through the help of the state societies, and it is especially desired to have their coöperation during the preparations for the international meetings of next year.

An interesting feature of the organization meeting in Vermont was that every hospital in the state was represented. The enthusiasm and interest of those present promised well for the future of the association.

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION TO BE HELD IN PHILADELPHIA

(Too Late for Classification)

The position of Chief Nurse of the Philadelphia Hospital is vacant and is to be filled by a competitive examination under civil service rules. This examination is to take place in June, the salary is \$1400, there are one thousand patients, one hundred and thirty nurses, and twenty or thirty head nurses. Those wishing to take the examination should apply in person, or write, to Room 875, City Hall, Philadelphia, Office of the Civil Service Commission, to obtain the necessary application forms. Philadelphia now has a reform administration and a woman of the most advanced methods is desired for this position.